

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

INDIVIDUAL READY RESERVE: ITS RELEVANCE IN AN ERA OF STRATEGIC CHANGE

by

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## ABSTRACT

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The Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) is an individual manpower pool comprised principally of trained personnel. IRR soldiers are subject to recall to active duty during a declaration of partial mobilization; under current law, IRR soldiers can be involuntarily called to active duty. Due to ongoing constrained financial resources, funding for the management of this manpower pool has been limited in favor of improved readiness of the Selected Reserve. This calculated neglect has resulted in mismanagement and further skills degradation of IRR personnel. Although IRR soldiers were used quite extensively in Operation Desert Storm, the senior civilian defense leadership were reluctant to authorize the use of the IRR soldiers during Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. This SRP analyzes the current and future utility of the IRR.



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## INDIVIDUAL READY RESERVE: ITS RELEVANCE IN AN ERA OF STRATEGIC CHANGE

...the Services should ensure that *individuals* and units of the Reserve Components are fully incorporated into all relevant operational plans and actually used in the execution of those plans.

—John P. White, Chairman  
Commission on Roles and Missions of the Armed Forces, 1995

As the Army transforms to meet Department of Defense goals in support of the National Security Strategy's preemptive options, it must maintain a military force that can "conduct rapid and precise operations to achieve decisive results."<sup>1</sup> As part of that military force, the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) is an individual manpower pool comprised principally of trained personnel who served on active duty or in the Selected Reserve. Due to constrained financial resources, funding for the management of the IRR manpower pool has been greatly reduced in favor of improved readiness of the Selected Reserve [Troop Program Units (TPU) and Individual Mobilization Augmentees (IMA)]. This calculated neglect of the IRR has resulted in continuing skills degradation of IRR personnel. Although the IRR was used quite extensively in Operation Desert Storm,<sup>2</sup> senior civilian leaders have been reluctant to authorize the use of this manpower during Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. Policy changes on the use of the IRR during Operations ONE, OEF, and OIF were implemented as the operation unfolded, putting the Services in a reactionary mode to respond to individual manpower requirements by the Combatant Commanders. This has significant implications on the future of this manpower pool. Given the current operating environment, the Army needs to consider transformational changes - but with controlled personnel and training management policies. If the Department is not willing to invest in this category of personnel, then it should take the necessary steps to eliminate the program.

### HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The National Defense Authorization Act of 1916 authorized the Reserve Components to be maintained under exclusive federal control. The Act included the Regular Army, the Volunteer Army, the Officer Reserve Corps, the Enlisted Reserve Corps, and the National Guard as military forces available for national service.<sup>3</sup> In that same year, the Army National Guard was called to active duty as individuals instead of units for service on the Mexican Border, a possible precursor to an IRR concept.<sup>4</sup> The National Defense Authorization Act of 1920 instituted the Organized Reserve consisting of the Officer Reserve Corps and the Enlisted

Reserve Corps.<sup>5</sup> At the time of the enactment of the Act, there were 4,000,000 men in an unorganized trained manpower pool of discharged veterans.<sup>6</sup>

The Armed Forces Reserve Act of July 9, 1952 formally established six Reserve components within the military departments.<sup>7</sup> The Act required members to be placed in one of three categories – the Ready Reserve, the Standby Reserve, or the Retired Reserve.<sup>8</sup> This Act created the first formally recognized Individual Ready Reserve program. Unfortunately, this Act created a large manpower pool of individuals available for call to active duty, rather than well-trained reservists participating in unit drills and summer training.<sup>9</sup> Subsequently, the Reserve Act of 1955 stipulated that soldiers who chose to serve under the National Reserve Plan and who satisfactorily participated in reserve activities would be rewarded by reduction of time assigned to the Ready Reserve. Further, those individuals who refused to participate in training with Reserve units would be penalized by serving additional periods of extended active duty.<sup>10</sup>

During the Korean War, 168,470 volunteers and inactive reservists were called to active duty.<sup>11</sup> To maintain unit integrity in the event of a full mobilization, enlisted men and junior officers were mobilized from the IRR instead of personnel from units.<sup>12</sup> Outdated personnel records maintained by the Services created significant problems during this recall. Because of incomplete personnel records, individuals were recalled who held skills acquired in World War II that the Services no longer required.<sup>13</sup> Special policy provisions were also adopted to ensure that recently returned veterans who had finished their active duty obligation and moved into the Reserves to complete their service obligation were not subsequently recalled.<sup>14</sup>

Individual reservists were used to support the Berlin Crisis in 1961; again the mobilization was made difficult by incomplete personnel records.<sup>15</sup> In 1968, 2,752 individual reservists were called to participate in the Vietnam conflict, with many arriving unqualified.<sup>16</sup> During Operation Desert Storm, 13,000 IRR soldiers and 5,000 individual volunteers were called to active duty. However, due to the Mobilization Asset Transfer Program, which allowed commanders to transfer substandard soldiers to the IRR, many soldiers arrived at the mobilization reception centers unsuitable or untrained resulting in discharge and unnecessary expenditures for travel and pay.<sup>17</sup>

The use of the IRR is anticipated during Partial Mobilization, which allows for involuntary call to active duty of the IRR. In 1997, the Office of Secretary of Defense pursued a legislative addition to the mobilization authority. This additional mobilization authority, IRR Activation Authority (IRRAA), allows for an involuntary call up of IRR personnel during a Presidential Reserve Call-Up (PRC). The initial concept of the program required all contractually-obligated IRR soldiers to be involuntarily transferred to the IRRAA program. However, when the concept

was sent to Congress it was changed to reflect enrollment on a volunteer basis only. IRR soldiers could volunteer to participate in the program with the understanding they can be involuntarily called to active duty under a PRC. The initial projections allowed for 3,500 soldiers to participate, but fewer than 750 soldiers opted to participate in the program. Some question the marketing strategy of the program and the number of soldiers afforded the opportunity to participate. Regardless, the program failed to meet expectations.

The IRR has seen a 60% decline in available manpower in the last ten years. This decline can be attributed to the downsizing of the Army. During the initial drawdown, many soldiers were reassigned into the IRR program to fulfill remaining service obligations, which caused an initial spike in the total IRR population. But as the strength of the Army began to level off and many soldiers completed their contractual obligations, the IRR program experienced a steady decline in overall strength. In 1990, the Active Army end strength was 732,000, while the IRR program included just over 300,000 personnel. By 1994, the IRR program had spiked to over 450,000 soldiers, while the Active Army end strength continued its decline. The Active Army end strength leveled off at 480,000 in 2000, with the IRR population decreasing to less than 180,000 personnel.

In 2002, the total IRR population was 132,888, with approximately 70,491 eligible for mobilization.<sup>18</sup> The delta between the total IRR program and those eligible for mobilization primarily consisted of individuals excluded as available due to bad addresses on file; but also included soldiers disqualified for character of service; suspension of favorable personnel actions; physical category codes; or the absence of an individual skill (non-qualified). In essence, the IRR program had become a quasi Transient, Trainee, Holdee, and Student (TTHS) account and a mere “dumping ground” for substandard soldiers.

#### ACCESSION INTO THE IRR MANPOWER POOL

As the Army’s primary source of pre-trained manpower under the Ready Reserve category, the IRR has a fundamental role in supporting the mobilization manning plan.<sup>19</sup> The manpower source for the IRR program consists primarily of soldiers with a remaining contractual obligation. Many are transitioning between Reserve manpower categories or units based on geographical relocations, and some have been identified as poor performers within the Selected Reserve and were transferred to the IRR as a result.

The IRR manpower pool consists of four primary control groups:<sup>20</sup>

- Control Group (Annual Training): Soldier has not completed statutory military service obligation and has less than three years of active duty.

- Control Group (Reinforcement): Soldier may or may not have a remaining service obligation, but has completed three or more years of active duty (or two years of active duty and one year in a Reserve unit).
- Control Group (Officer Active Duty Obligor): Officers commissioned through Reserve Officers' Training Corps with delayed entry onto active duty or Reserve Forces duty. This includes officers participating in an Army Medical Department educational, internship, or residency program; officers assigned to a Staff Specialist branch as a chaplain candidate; or officers commissioned from the Medical Service Corps or Veterinary Corps voluntary active duty program who are awaiting instructions from the Surgeon General.
- Control Group (Dual Component): Army Reserve commissioned officers serving actively as Regular Army enlisted soldiers or warrant officers. This small group of less than 500 soldiers is not immediately available as a mobilization asset because they are in the Regular Army.<sup>21</sup>

Soldiers can voluntarily request reassignment from the Selected Reserve (Troop Program Unit or Individual Mobilization Augmentee) when there is a confirmed irresolvable employment conflict; or when the move to an area that is not within reasonable commuting distance of a Army Reserve training center; or for cogent personal reasons with an approved exception to policy by a Major U.S. Army Reserve Command, typically the Regional Readiness Commands.<sup>22</sup> In addition, officers can request reassignment to accept mandatory promotions or when they are non-selected for retention in a Troop Program Unit by a Selective Continuation Board but have a remaining statutory or contractual obligation. Officers can be involuntarily reassigned to the IRR control group if they have not completed Officer Basic Course, are assigned above the maximum strength limits, or are declared unsatisfactory participants. An enlisted soldier can request voluntary reassignment based on sole survivor status, dependency or hardship, pregnancy, or non-selection for retention by a Qualitative Retention Board.<sup>23</sup> Enlisted personnel can be involuntarily reassigned to the IRR control group as an unsatisfactory participant or for lack of duty position qualification and when the soldier has not begun training within 12 months of assignment to a duty position or is not qualified within 24 months of assignment to a duty position.<sup>24</sup>

### **Contractually Obligated**

Contractually obligated soldiers transition into the IRR program to complete a military service obligation. Service obligations can be served under various options determined at the

time of initial enlistment. An example would be three years served in an active status and five years served in an inactive status. The inactive status is normally performed by reassignment to the IRR control group.

Under the provisions of 10 USC 10205, soldiers completing their remaining service obligation in the IRR program are required to keep personal locator information current in the event they must be recalled to active duty involuntarily to meet a mobilization mission.<sup>25</sup> As of March 2003, over 38,000 IRR soldiers out of a total of 138,000 soldiers have failed to do this and do not have a current address on file. Because of legal and privacy act considerations under current tax law contained in 26 USC – Internal Revenue Code, the Human Resource Command – St. Louis (HRC-St. Louis)<sup>26</sup> could not use other government agencies to obtain current addresses and was forced to seek assistance from external credit agencies to locate these soldiers at a considerable cost. In April 2003, HRC-St. Louis proposed a reduction of 15,000 to 20,000 of the 38,000 bad addresses on file based on the award of a contract with TransUnion. Prior to this contract, HRC-St. Louis was required to submit individual requests to the credit agencies and await feedback, which could take up to 14 days. Under the new contract, HRC-St. Louis can provide a bulk list of individuals to TransUnion and receive feedback within 24-48 hours.<sup>27</sup> If successful, this new contract could greatly reduce the bad address exclusion, thereby providing additional mobilization assets.

The Office of the Secretary of Defense proposed legislative changes in the Omnibus '04 package to Congress to seek assistance in identifying the last known address through the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS previously resisted such legislation, but has shown recent interest in supporting the action.<sup>28</sup> The legislative changes were not approved as tax law to 26 USC – Internal Revenue Code, however, OSD will continue to pursue the action in the Omnibus '05 package.<sup>29</sup>

### **Transients**

Soldiers may fall under the transient category of IRR personnel if they are moving from one manpower category to another or if they are reservists relocating to a new area and currently do not have an assigned unit. Personnel automation software does not support soldiers transitioning from a Troop Program Unit directly to the Individual Mobilization Augmentation program. The personnel record has to be transferred to the IRR control group and then to the new manpower category. This results in delay of Reserve assignments with 2nd and 3rd on effects with financial transactions. The HRC-St. Louis has made tremendous strides

in the last year correcting this computer software problem, thereby eliminating the need to transition personnel records through the IRR control group.

The Army Reserve is currently in the test stages of establishing a Trainee, Transient, Holdee, and Student (TTHS) account. This account will afford the local commanders the ability to transfer soldiers that are relocating into the TTHS account, thereby eliminating the need to transfer the soldier into the IRR manpower category. This also enables the personnel managers to maintain control over soldiers until they arrive at the new location.

This transient category also includes officers mandatorily-selected for promotion to the next higher grade without a Reserve unit position. These officers can transfer to the IRR and accept the promotion when they meet mandatory time in grade requirements. However, given the limited availability of senior officer positions within a geographical area, many officers become permanent members instead of transient members of the IRR.

With the development of an Army Reserve TTHS account, the transient category of personnel could be reduced or eliminated from the IRR control group.<sup>30</sup>

### **Substandard Performers**

Substandard performers have probably been the most controversial IRR issue. Prior to the enactment of the Reserve Officer Promotion Management Act (ROPMA) of 1 October 1996, the Active Army transferred officers that were twice non-selected for promotion to the IRR program. The rationale for this policy was questionable since the implication was that an officer may not be good enough to maintain an active status but may still be good enough to be in the Reserves. With the implementation of ROPMA, Active Army officers have the option to transfer into the Reserves as one time non-selects but if they are twice non-selected, they are removed from the service. Although this new policy has contributed to the decline in the IRR manpower, few could argue that it is not in the best interest of the Army.

The most common type of substandard performers is soldiers that fail to attend the required drill assemblies. After failing to attend nine training periods in a 12-month period, they are transferred into the IRR control group. This policy degrades the quality of the IRR program. If soldiers fail to attend drill, why would the Army expect they will answer a call to active duty in the event of a mobilization? Under the provisions of 10 USC 10148, Ready Reserve soldiers who fail to satisfactorily perform prescribed training can, without the consent of the soldier, be called to active duty for not more than 45 days to complete the training requirement.<sup>31</sup> However, current policy and procedures do not support implementing this law. An order to active duty would require approval of the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Reserve Affairs [ASA(M&RA)].

The bureaucratic documentation required to implement this action would overwhelm the system. An alternative would be to process these soldiers under the same criteria as a soldier who is absent without leave. After 30 days, the derelict soldier should be dropped from the rolls and processed for separation under other than honorable or a bad conduct discharge.<sup>32</sup>

Soldiers who fail to meet minimal education requirements within an allotted period of time can also be involuntarily transferred to the IRR control group. If they fail to satisfactorily complete initial active duty training, by law, they cannot be deployed overseas.<sup>33</sup> As of January 2003, there were 4,926 personnel who had not completed initial training.<sup>34</sup> Given the limited training funds available to the IRR control group and the lack of initiative on the part of the individual to complete the training, these soldiers should also be discharged from the service.

Other categories of substandard performance include soldiers who fail to meet Army body fat standards, those involuntarily relieved from drill sergeant duty, and soldiers reported as a “no show” to their assigned unit. There are 519 personnel in the IRR control group for character of service and 7,239 personnel for suspension of favorable actions (Bar to Reenlistment).<sup>35</sup> If the soldiers fail to meet their membership responsibilities in other manpower categories, they will likely fail to meet their membership responsibilities in the IRR control group. Past behavior is a good indication of future behavior.

#### SUSTAINMENT OF THE IRR MANPOWER POOL

Given the sources of the IRR manpower, it is understandable that sustainment of this pool is plagued with problems. The problem is compounded by funding constraints placed on the personnel and training management of the program, so the pool is in jeopardy. The HRC-St. Louis is responsible to the Army G-1 for the personnel and training management of the IRR manpower pool. However, funding for the management of this program flows through the Office of the Chief, Army Reserve, and this is not expected to change under the realignment of the Human Resource Command.<sup>36</sup> Historically, funding has been limited, since most resources are diverted to high priority unit readiness. This includes funding for professional development, individual deployment readiness (e.g., physical examinations), reclassification, and active duty training events. HRC-St. Louis is also responsible for assisting soldiers in the preparation of promotion packets. However, the ratio of career manager to number of soldiers managed limits the amount of time each manager has available to dedicate to any one soldier. The soldier is left to his own personnel management typically by mail. Currently, there are no metrics to measure the success of IRR management. Unlike the unit status report which reflects the level of unit readiness, the HRC-St. Louis is not graded on the readiness of the IRR program.



Unfortunately, their performance is normally discovered during a mobilization, when it is too late to make changes and fix deficiencies.

The uncertainty in readiness levels of the IRR program is particularly disconcerting in view of high demand skills sets required to meet current operational requirements. The IRR manpower pool is categorized based on recent training experience, specifically identified as Recently Trained 12 (RT12), RT24, and RT36 categories. The numeric designation refers to the number months elapsed since the soldier received training. For example, RT24 are soldiers who have completed a training event within the last 24 months. The vast majority of the RT24 soldiers have a remaining service obligation. They are the most skilled of the manpower pool due to their recent training experience. Table 1 below reflects the high demand officer skill set requested in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. Table 2 reflects the enlisted high demand skills sets.<sup>37</sup> Over 80% of the soldiers within these skills sets are in the RT36+ category. Since it has been over three years since these soldiers have operated or trained in the skill set, there is a high probability their skills have degraded to the point of being non-operational without significant refresher training.<sup>38</sup> It would cost the Army \$18.6 million dollars annually to conduct the two-week refresher training just to maintain these high demand skills. However, due to skill degradation, many of the soldiers within the RT36+ category will probably require additional MOS training beyond the normal two-week refresher training, at an average cost of \$194 dollars per day per soldier<sup>39</sup> to get them to a deployable level. Given the current Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 IRR readiness training budget of \$18.548 million in FY 2004 for the entire IRR program (which will train only 3,434 soldiers), and \$17.559 million projected for FY 2005 (which will train only 3,114 soldiers), the Army cannot maintain high demand skills in the IRR, let alone other skills, without significant resource adjustments.<sup>40</sup>

<b>Skill Set</b>	<b>RT12</b>	<b>RT24</b>	<b>RT36+</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>Military Police</i>	9	5	435	449
<i>Military Intelligence</i>	14	15	783	812
<i>Civil Affairs</i>	10	6	150	166
<i>Chemical</i>	5	0	202	207
<i>Mortuary Affairs</i>	0	0	0	0

TABLE 1. HIGH DEMAND OFFICER SKILLS

<b>Skill Set</b>	<b>RT12</b>	<b>RT24</b>	<b>RT36+</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<i>Military Police</i>	79	280	2727	3086
<i>Military Intelligence</i>	47	152	1440	1639
<i>Civil Affairs</i>	2	0	319	321
<i>Chemical</i>	21	57	786	864
<i>Mortuary Affairs</i>	0	10	44	54

TABLE 2. HIGH DEMAND ENLISTED SKILLS

Of the 132,888 soldiers currently assigned to the pool, less than 70,000 are available as a ready pre-trained source in the event of a mobilization. This does not take into consideration the training required to upgrade this pool to a viable asset, since many have outdated or mismatched military occupational skills (MOSs). Training of IRR personnel typically does not occur until mobilization. The mobilization training base expansion plan focuses on processing and pre-deployment, refresher, and certification training of IRR personnel.<sup>41</sup> In the event of a mobilization, IRR personnel will receive active duty orders directing them to a reception station located in the Continental United States (CONUS). Once soldiers arrive at the reception station, they will be accessed onto active duty and receive training in basic soldier skills. This process takes about ten days. The soldier is then sent to a schoolhouse to assess degradation of skills and identify refresher training, as needed. This process could take less than three weeks or more than six months, depending on the level of degradation. The degree of training base expansion is defined by the training requirement and the current peacetime training load.

During peacetime, the IRR Control Group (Annual Training) has an annual training requirement, but historically this is not strictly enforced. Soldiers can voluntarily request attachment to a unit for the purpose of training or participation in training exercises. HRC-St. Louis approves these training events based on available funding. The funding for this program is drawn from the same IRR readiness training account used for the two-week refresher training; so funding, as stated above, is very limited. IRR Soldiers can request to attend schools; however, funding for IRR soldiers is included in the Army Reserve School training account and, therefore, they are competing for the same dollars as TPU and IMA soldiers, so selection is limited.<sup>42</sup> This is problematic for professional development of junior grade officers who are not afforded the opportunity to attend their Advanced Course and Combined Arms Service Staff

School, or Captain's Career Course under the educational transformation plan. In addition, this problem is exacerbated if they are not afforded the opportunity to attend CAS3 and then are unable to enroll in Command and General Staff Course for promotion to Lieutenant Colonel.

#### CURRENT UTILIZATION OF THE IRR MANPOWER POOL

The IRR manpower pool was used extensively in Operation Desert Storm (ODS), when more than 19,000 IRR personnel were called to active duty. Conversely, during Operations Noble Eagle (ONE), Enduring Freedom (OEF), and Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the total mobilized as of May 9, 2003 was just over 1,200 personnel.<sup>43</sup> The number of personnel supporting the OIF mission alone was nearly half of the required personnel for ODS, and the initial unit shortfall and casualty projections for OIF were 11,000 soldiers. However, the senior civilian defense leaders decided not to involuntarily call-up the IRR manpower pool. The Services were directed to acquire casualty and unit filler personnel from Active and Reserve units. The senior civilian defense leaders felt the Services did not adequately inform IRR personnel of their mobilization responsibilities prior to the onset of conflict and thus IRR soldiers would not be adequately prepared, both personally and professionally, for the recall to active duty.<sup>44</sup>

#### **IRR Mobilization Planning and Processing**

In addition to the lack of control on the size of the IRR population, there is no documented force structure to assign personnel transferring to the IRR control group. The Army G-1 uses the Mobilization Manpower Planning System (MOBMAN) to determine what manpower requirements by skills sets (skill and grade level detail) are needed to bring Active Army and Reserve units to authorized levels, as defined by The Army Authorization Documents System (TAADS), in preparation for deployment. MOBMAN is a scenario-driven system used to ascertain manpower requirements in support of a combatant commander's war plan, which includes Time Phased Force Deployment Data (TPFDD).<sup>45</sup> MOBMAN estimates projected, time-phased manpower surpluses and shortfalls by skill sets within a pre-determined time increment, such as every ten days or every thirty days. This system adjusts for projected casualty shelf requirements (e.g., battlefield casualties plus non-battle injuries minus return to duty) as provided by the Army Component Command of the Combatant Command, in coordination with the Center for Army Analysis.

The shortfall individual mobilization requirements are then inserted into the Mobilization Army Program for Individual Training (MOBARPRINT) system, which determines the delta between the current peacetime training pipeline and what training requirements will be needed to support the mobilization manpower shortfall requirements. This delta in training could result

in a Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) training base expansion to meet this additional training requirement. The time-phased data by skill set provides TRADOC mobilization planners the information required to meet training requirements for a given scenario.

Given the required skills and the training timeline, Army G-1 requests HRC-St. Louis to identify IRR personnel to meet that requirement. HRC-St. Louis uses the Mobilization Personnel System (MOBPERS), which compares the MOBMAN data against the personnel data, to identify, by name, individuals who meet the mobilization requirement. MOBPERS contains the personnel information of all Reserve and retired personnel under the management control of HRC-St. Louis. When a soldier is identified in the MOBPERS system to fill the requirement, the system is designed to automatically generate a mobilization order and dispatch it by mail to the soldier. Figure 1 illustrates this Mobilization Manning Process.

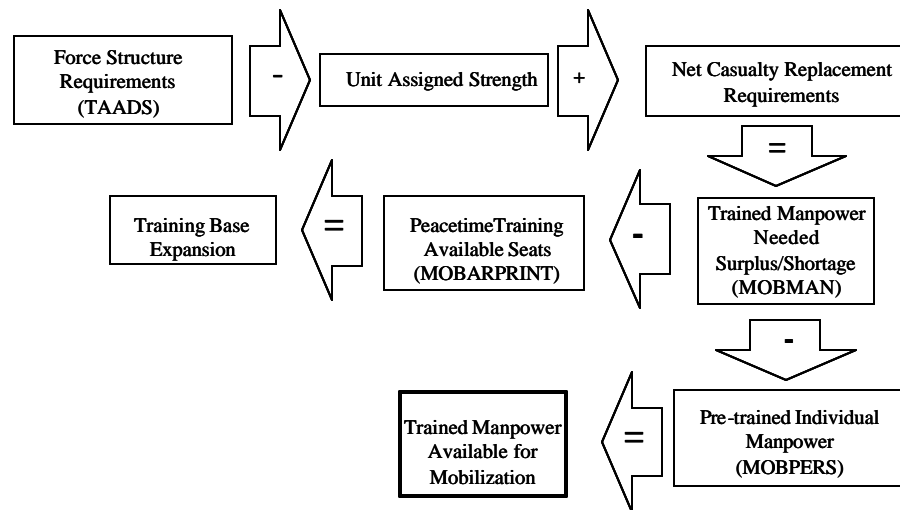


FIGURE 1. MOBILIZATION MANNING PROCESS

Soldiers in the IRR are not pre-slotted against structure documents based on capabilities or skill sets needed to meet operational missions. Consequently significant MOS mismatches often exist between requirements and manpower on hand and are usually not discovered until the initial planning phase of an operation.

A current Army study seeks to rebalance the Active and Reserve forces with part of the discussion centered on the authorized level of organization (ALO) of Active and Reserve units. The Army built overstructure into the force to provide a more flexible warfighting capability.<sup>46</sup>

This overstructure resulted in the majority of units maintaining an ALO 3 or 4 status, which equates to 75-80% authorized strength compared to required strength. This concept assumes that pre-trained individual manpower accounts can be used to bring units back up to ALO 1 prior to deployment. Indeed the concept assumes: 1) the IRR manpower accounts are readily accessible; and 2) the skill sets within the IRR will meet the unit filler requirements.

Given the constrained access to the IRR, the current status of available IRR personnel, and the accelerated deployment timelines, the Army is re-evaluating the overstructure concept. The Army Reserve and Army National Guard are already proposing changes in the Total Army Analysis 11 to remove reliance on the overstructure and align requirements with authorizations. The Active Army is also reviewing the overstructure issue and will either propose an increase in Army end strength to bring units to ALO 1, thereby building rotational depth to meet future requirements, or remove the overstructure and re-align requirements with authorizations to bring units to ALO 1. As previously mentioned, the Army Reserve is currently testing the viability of a TTHS account. If properly managed, non-MOS qualified Reserve soldiers will be assigned to the TTHS account instead of occupying a valid authorized position within a Reserve unit. This affords the Unit Commander the ability to fill the position with a qualified soldier thereby improving the unit's overall personnel readiness.

Given the restructuring efforts by the Army, there could be less reliance on the pre-trained individual manpower pool to fill unit shortfalls. The only other IRR manpower requirements would be to fill the casualty shelf requirements. With increased technology in precision munitions, individual protective armor, medical life saving techniques, and automated tracking systems such as "blue force" tracking<sup>47</sup>, the casualty estimates have dwindled, so casualties can, potentially, be replaced through the peacetime accessioning pipeline.

### **Operational Employment**

In support of Operation Desert Storm, call-up of the IRR was executed using the MOBMAN, MOBAPRINT, and MOBPERS data systems explained above. The success of the connectivity between the systems facilitated the call-up of 19,000 IRR personnel to meet shortfall requirements. In support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, the connectivity between the systems was disrupted by the Army's senior civilian leadership to approve only IRR volunteers by-name.<sup>48</sup> The IRR acquisition system was not prepared for this sudden policy shift. Previous administrations approved the specific operational requirement for IRR personnel and the Army G-1 directed the mobilization of IRR personnel to meet operational requirements. This process was automated to expedite notification to the

soldier. The new process created delays in notification, and required additional funding to reprogram the computer software to accept a "by-name" approval process. This delay caused Active and Reserve units to be deployed at less than their authorized deployment levels.

In the initial phases of Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom, access to the IRR personnel was limited to volunteers only. IRR soldiers were required to volunteer their services by telephonically contacting the HRC-St. Louis. HRC-St. Louis maintained a database containing the names of those IRR soldiers who volunteered to be mobilized. When this pool was exhausted, the access was extended to include non-volunteers as long as the Service staff could demonstrate the application of a Stop Loss policy for a particular skill, even if there was no projected shortage in the Active Army for the particular skill set. Civilian leaders elected to disrupt the integrity of Army units by reassigning Active Army soldiers with needed skills to engaged units, even though individual IRR soldiers with the needed skills were available, in order to be less disruptive to the civilian life of the IRR soldier.

The Army senior civilian leaders eventually provided some relief in the constrained procedures by eliminating the by-name approval requirement, but the Army staff still had to demonstrate that soldiers identified for mobilization had not been released from active duty within the last 24 months. In essence, this policy restricted the use of soldiers with an initial mandatory service obligation and the highest level of skill retention. Perhaps senior leaders rationalized this policy with the idea that soldiers in this situation were still attempting to re-establish their home, work, and family following a term of honorable service.

As the operation continued to unfold, an OSD-level policy shift further restricted the use of the IRR. The IRR personnel could not be called to active duty unless the Services could demonstrate that all other manpower sources had been exhausted, to include the use of Reserve units. Again, unit integrity was sacrificed to prevent the use of an IRR soldier. Because of the excessive restrictions, the Department was unable to break through the quagmire to assess IRR personnel onto active duty. Many units deployed at less than optimal readiness levels. In addition, the Combatant Commander received the 1st casualty shelf package consisting of soldiers extracted from later deploying Active Army units. Fortunately, the Iraqi operation unfolded much quicker than anticipated with few casualties, thereby eliminating the need for additional individual filler personnel.

A U.S. General Accounting Office audit released August 2003 found the Department of Defense could not rely on existing operational plans and therefore modified the process which "relied on additional management oversight and multiple layers of coordination" that "resulted in a process that was slower and less efficient than the traditional process." It went on to report

the Secretary of Defense signed 246 deployment orders to mobilize 280,000 reservists for the current operations compared to 10 deployment orders for 220,000 reservists in Operation Desert Storm. The audit also recommended increased access to the IRR and updates of IRR policies prior to the onset of conflict.<sup>49</sup>

## SUMMARY

Given the current geo-political environment, increased deployments of both the Active Army and the Reserves, and the increased demands on the Services to undergo transformation, the IRR manpower pool, along with the policies and procedures that govern the management and utilization of the IRR program, should undergo a complete transformation.

HRC-St. Louis should comprehensively review all soldiers currently assigned to the IRR manpower pool. The review should focus primarily on the contractually obligated soldiers. Soldiers desiring to stay beyond their initial enlistments should do so according to the needs of the Service. Given current skill shortages, soldiers should be directed to reclassify and participate in reclassification training to gain effectiveness within a new skill set.

As the Army Reserve builds a TTHS account, several categories of personnel (transients and trainees) will no longer be transferred to the IRR control group, thus reducing the size of this account. If the Army revises current regulations to prevent substandard performers from being transferred to the IRR control group, this will also reduce the size of the account. If the soldiers do not meet membership responsibilities in the Selected Reserve, they will most assuredly not meet the membership requirements in the IRR control group. These soldiers should be discharged under the appropriate service conditions (e.g., honorable, other than honorable or general discharge)

For soldiers who fail to abide by the law and maintain a current address on file, HRC-St. Louis should take steps to process individuals for dereliction to report, much the same way soldiers are processed for Absent Without Leave (AWOL). IRR soldiers have a responsibility to maintain a current address on file as part of their service obligation, much like a soldier on active status has the responsibility to report to duty. Policies and procedures should be developed whereby the IRR soldier would be dropped from the rolls after a specified period of time and processed for separation under less than honorable conditions or general discharge. The Service expends too much energy and funding to track down these individuals. To put more bite in the policy, soldiers in this status could be reported to the local law enforcement authorities. The next time the individual is stopped by the authorities, they could be detained

and transported to the nearest Army facility for processing, just like Active Duty soldiers who are AWOL.

Given the current restrictions on recall of individuals with less than 24 months since departing from active service (RT24), the Army should consider a change to the contractual obligations if this current policy becomes future doctrine. The soldier should be required to fulfill the remaining service obligation in the Selected Reserve,<sup>50</sup> thereby gaining access based on unit call up. It does not seem practical to contractually obligate soldiers to serve a two-year period in the IRR if there is no intent to recall the soldier.

Under the direction of the Chief, Army Reserve, the Selected Reserve is undergoing a structural transformation which includes the development of a rotational base.<sup>51</sup> The IRR program can play a significant role in that rotational base if it maintains a manning document that identifies the capabilities or skill sets required to meet operational demands. This can be accomplished through an annual MOBMAN analysis of approved operational war plans translated into "force structure" requirements. IRR personnel can then be slotted against those validated requirements on a manning document. The fill rate against the requirements could be used as a measure of overall readiness of the program.

If the Army successfully rebalances the force, manages to bring both Reserve and Active units to ALO 1, and the Army Reserve successfully develops a TTHS account, there would be no unit filler requirements from the IRR manpower pool. The only viable use of the IRR manpower pool would be to support casualty filler shelf requirements. With the significant reduction in battle casualty estimates based on precision munitions, individual protective armor, and advanced medical technologies, casualty filler requirements would be greatly reduced.

In view of the dwindling IRR manpower pool, critical shortages in many key skill sets, and the recently experienced obstacles to IRR call-up, continued reliance on the IRR as a viable basis for Army mobilization manning plans and doctrine may not be prudent.<sup>52</sup> With the Army's proposed ALO changes and the recommendations and analysis provided in this research project, the IRR could be eliminated within the next 6-10 years. If the Department is not willing to invest in this category of personnel, then it should take the necessary steps to eliminate the program. The current IRR system provides only a false sense of security that does not support the transformation initiative or future operational requirements. However, given the current operational requirements supporting a protracted limited war, the Department may need to reinvest in this pool in the interim - but with controlled management policies, formalized structure, legislative changes, and metrics designed to measure success. By re-establishing management controls, the Army can demonstrate to the senior Department of Defense civilian



leadership that this manpower pool is protected and well managed to meet the future and short-term national security requirements.

WORD COUNT= 6,196

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: The White House, September 2002), 16.

<sup>2</sup> Up to 19,000 IRR personnel were mobilized in support of Operation Desert Storm.

<sup>3</sup> William F. Levantrosser, *Congress and the Citizen-Soldier: Legislative Policy-Making for the Federal Armed Forces Reserve* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University, 1967), 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 14.

<sup>6</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower, *An Enlisted Reserve for the Regular Army*, Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, Student Paper, 20 March 1928, 5.

<sup>7</sup> *Armed Forces Reserve Act*, Statutes at Large 66, sec. 204, 462 (1952).

<sup>8</sup> The Selected Reserve category (Troop Program Units and Individual Mobilization Augmentees) within the Ready Reserve was developed in 1967. It further restricted eligibility for inactive-duty training pay and retirement points to members of the Selected Reserve.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 61.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, 65.

<sup>11</sup> I. Heymont and E.W. McGregor, *Review and Analysis of Recent Mobilizations and Deployments of US Army Reserve Components* (McLean, VA: RAC, 1972), 3-4.

<sup>12</sup> Levantrosser, 52.

<sup>13</sup> Heymont and McGregor, 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> Levantrosser, 52.

<sup>15</sup> Heymont, 4-5.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 5-5.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Army Center for Lessons Learned, *Mobilization of the Reserve Components (RC) for Operations Desert Shield/Storm*, Newsletter 92-2, February 1992, vi.

<sup>18</sup> Elton Bruce, COL, "Current IRR Capability," briefing slides presented to General Larry R. Ellis, Army Reserve Personnel Command, 23 January 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Ed Hackett, Mobilization Planner, Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), interview by author, 10 June 2003, Washington, DC.

<sup>20</sup> Department of the Army, *Assignments, Attachments, Details, and Transfers*, Army Regulation 140-10 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, 1 September 1994), 21.

<sup>21</sup> Haywood L. West, LTC, *The Individual Ready Reserve: A Mobilization Asset*, Strategy Research Project (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, 24 June 1992, 6.

<sup>22</sup> The Regional Readiness Commands were formally known as the Regional Supports Commands.

<sup>23</sup> Army Regulation 140-10, 22.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 25.

<sup>25</sup> 10 USC 10205 states: "Each member of the Ready Reserve shall notify the Secretary concerned of any change in the member's address, marital status, number of dependents, or civilian employment and of any change in the member's physical condition that would prevent the member from meeting the physical or mental standards prescribed for the member's armed force."

<sup>26</sup> Formerly the Army Reserve Personnel Command or AR-PERSCOM.

<sup>27</sup> Stephanie Jeffords, COL, Director Plans and Operations, Army Reserve Personnel Command, telephone interview by author in preparation for briefing to Deputy Assistant Secretary for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, 24 February 2003, Washington, DC.

<sup>28</sup> Dan Koehner, Office of Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, interview by author, February 2003, Washington, DC.

<sup>29</sup> Dan Koehner, <Dan.Koehner@osd.mil>, Office of Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs, "IRR Program," electronic mail message to Corrina Boggess, <corrina.boggess@us.army.mil>, 14 January 2004.

<sup>30</sup> The TTHS will include officers selected for promotion that temporarily have no available position at their new grade within the geographical area.

<sup>31</sup> 10 USC 10148, states: "A member of the Ready Reserve covered by section 10147 of this title who fails in any year to perform satisfactorily the training duty prescribed in that section, as determined by the Secretary concerned under regulations prescribed by the Secretary of Defense, may be ordered without his consent to perform additional active duty for training for not more than 45 days. If the failure occurs during the last year of his required membership in the Ready Reserve, his membership is extended until he performs that additional active duty for training, but not for more than six months."

<sup>32</sup> Department of the Army, *Absence Without Leave, Desertion, and Administration of Personnel Involved in Civilian Court Proceedings*, Army Regulation 630-10 (Washington, DC: US Department of the Army, 22 January 2004), 5.

<sup>33</sup> *Members Not To Be Assigned Outside United States Before Completing Training*, U.S. Code, vol. 10, sec. 671 (1993).

<sup>34</sup> Elton Bruce, 23 January 2003.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 23 January 2003.

<sup>36</sup> Ronald Logsdon, COL, Special Projects Officer for Human Resource Command Realignment, telephone interview by author, 18 January 2004.

<sup>37</sup> Elton Bruce, 23 January 2003.

<sup>38</sup> RT followed by a numerical designation refers to the number of months since the soldier has trained or performed within the skill set, e.g., RT12 refers to a soldier has completed training or performed in the skills set within the last 12 months.

<sup>39</sup> This daily cost factor was derived from the Office of the Chief Army Reserve, Financial Management Officer, "Department of the Army Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Budget Estimate, Reserve Personnel, Army" for IRR Readiness Training computed using the 2005 Enlisted Rate of \$2,517 for 13 days of active duty training.

<sup>40</sup> Deborah Richardson, MAJ, <Deborah.richardson@us.army.mil>, Office of the Chief Army Reserve, Financial Management Officer, "Department of the Army Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Budget Estimate, Reserve Personnel, Army," electronic mail message to Corrina Boggess, <corrina.boggess@us.army.mil>, 17 February 2004.

<sup>41</sup> Ed Hackett, TRADOC.

<sup>42</sup> Deborah Richardson, 17 February 2004.

<sup>43</sup> Stephanie Jeffords, 13 May 2003.

<sup>44</sup> Information provided by the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) during the April 2004 Command Readiness Program Conference, Little Rock, AK.

<sup>45</sup> Time Phased Force Deployment Data is a report which identifies unit line numbers or units designations phased over time to control flow and transportation assets into theater.

<sup>46</sup> The Army built additional units into the force structure with documented requirements above the congressionally mandated end strength (authorizations). During peacetime, these units would be allocated authorizations much lower than their documented requirements with the assumption the units would be allocated filler personnel prior to mobilization and deployment to bring them up to documented requirements.

<sup>47</sup> "Blue force" tracking is an automated system that allows subscribed users to view friendly forces in the battlespace.

<sup>48</sup> Army G-1 could not involuntary mobilize an IRR soldier who departed from active service within the previous two years nor could they involuntary mobilize an IRR soldier who was mobilized within the last two years unless the Service implemented a Stop Loss policy across the Service within that skill.

<sup>49</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office, *DoD Actions Needed to Improve the Efficiency of Mobilizations for Reserve Forces* (Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office, August 20030, 1.

<sup>50</sup> Assigned to a reserve unit or as an Individual Mobilization Augmentee.

<sup>51</sup> Rotational base is defined as the development of sufficient authorized and sourced force structure within a particular skills set or unit mission capability that reduces the number of deployments, or rotations, for any given individual or unit over a long period of time. This provides operational depth within a skills set or unit mission capability.

<sup>52</sup> Ed Hackett, TRADOC.

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